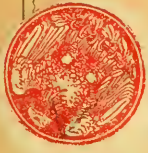


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# SECESSION:



# IN THE FUTURE.

PHILADELPHIA :

KING & BAIRD, PRINTERS, No. 607 SANSON STREET.

1862





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# SECESSION:

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IN THE FUTURE.

*J R Ingersoll*



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## Secession: in the Future.

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THE future of our country is regarded as uncertain. In this it resembles, with some features peculiar to itself, every other future. Who can foretell precisely to-day what to-morrow may bring forth in the commonest routine of individual life, or ordinary national progress? No one can control his fate, or even perceive its development. The mind is variously influenced, according to its own innate tendencies, as well as by outward circumstances; and it contemplates days to come, as sure in prospective existence, but vaguely defined in character and incident. Under the influence of these sentiments we propose to devote a few pages to a consideration of the probable state of the nation in the coming time. Enough is known for the proposed inquiry, although not to resolve the problem with mathematical exactitude, yet to reach a gratifying assurance of the truth. Speaking in a logical sense, the premises are broad enough for a satisfactory conclusion. The subject is attended with difficulty sufficient to warn us of the necessity of patient inquiry and untiring activity. It cannot be an unwelcome task to

watch the progress, and reason upon the end of the rebellion, and it is a becoming duty to look if possible into the consequences, whether fatal or fortunate, that may ensue—beyond.

There are many phases in the strife. Still it is fairly to be inferred that the Union cause will triumph. Some of the reasons for entertaining these hopes are submitted for candid consideration. No ground exists for apprehension that any thing has occurred or is likely to occur to occasion a serious doubt, much less to infuse a symptom of despair. Certainly there is nothing in the present proofs of skill in commanding officers, or bravery among the troops from various parts of the country and from abroad, who vie with each other in heroic emulation to triumph by land and water, that can fail to brighten the prospects, prosperity or glory of the nation.

Many of the evils to be dreaded arise from an abuse or forgetfulness of the present and consequent interference with the preparations required for the future. All that is fitting is at hand and heartily requires a befitting use. Let us go on and we shall prosper. The present and the future require only an accomplishment of what is doing well, in the direct line of duty. Nothing is so plain and broad as this onward path. Error consists in turning to the right hand or the left. Danger arises from listening to idle suggestions of individual ambition, which puts aside what the public good earnestly requires, and leads to unbecoming per-

sonal controversy and abuse on the floors of Congress, and worse than idle discussions of what are not even collateral issues, or practical results. A great cause is before us. A great rebellion is to be defeated. This should absorb as it deserves and should receive universal and devoted attention to the entire exclusion of matter that is independent, consisting too often of mischievous intermeddling with things that should now be let alone. Quite enough is presented for action in the actual promptings of duty. It may be obstructed by the indulgence of individual caprice, or topics of familiar favor and preference. Pride and passion must give way to patriotism. A love of personal distinction and display must yield to a love of country. No ambition to lead should be indulged when all stand in effect shoulder to shoulder in the magnanimous and united effort to protect, defend, and preserve the common good.

Slavery in its various hues is a frequent theme. Sometimes it has a remote possible bearing upon the points now a issue, but rarely, if ever, a necessary or useful one. It is to a greater or less extent at this time, a mischievous interference with vital affairs. But it is tempting, as it affords a ready field for declamation, and is sure to reflect the sentiments of a party which is the most violent of all. Whether the particular object be right or wrong, it is for the most part altogether out of place. Yet it may be that under other circumstances, and at a proper season, it would

not be pernicious. The objection here is that it divides where there ought to be harmony; and, to use a legislative phrase, it is not in order. Why, for example, should Congress at this precious time have been occupied in discussing the question of recognizing the independent existence of Hayti and Liberia? In the abstract the recognition would be right enough. It has slumbered, however, tranquilly for many years, and would not have suffered from prolonged repose. It was indeed an affair of Executive consideration. The constitutional power is conferred on the President, and he has not thought fit to exercise it now, or formerly, in this behalf. Like most things with a tinge of African blood in them, it is a fire-brand, and was thrown as such among combustible materials. It was opposed, partly, on the ground that it involved a probability of a man of color being sent as minister from one or other of those governments. More than one member expressed his willingness to receive black ministers. Without such intimation there could have been little danger of what could only be regarded as a social calamity. In England the recognition was made many years ago; but the dark incident has never presented itself. The Republic of Liberia was some time since, and probably still is, represented by Mr. Ralston, a native of Philadelphia, residing in London. Social equality between the two races is not to be desired, and is practically out of the question. Persons of African blood are not even citizens of Pennsylvania; and yet that State led

the way in the career of emancipation. The elective franchise is confined by the Constitution to *white* free-men alone. (Art. III., Sec. 1.) If the capital error should be committed under such circumstances of sending a negro, it is presumed that a reception of him would be declined without fear of giving offence.

Recognition of Liberia has long been wished for, and urged upon the government. A petition to that effect has lately been published, which is a mere copy of the one presented when Mr. Fillmore exercised the functions of President. It was supported by a special delegation from the Pennsylvania Colonization Society. Mr. Webster, then Secretary of State, was favorable to it. The head of the Government, deeming, as was supposed, the moment not propitious, made no movement in its favor, and the object was not attained. They, who at that time pressed the measure, and took active steps for its promotion, have undergone no change of sentiment: but they deem it unwise to suffer any thing not directly needful to the immediate crisis, and therefore an interference, to be pursued. Let us effectually put down rebellion. When that vital end is accomplished, a more fitting opportunity would be presented for promoting what at the utmost is only collateral, and even in that respect out of time.

In devoting every care and exertion to the great contest in which we are engaged, the present and the future are honorably provided for. The eye of the mind like that of the body sees nothing clearly at a

distance. It looks to what is to happen as bright or dark; and the imagination is gratified by a supposed store of fruitful enjoyment, or filled with dismay at the dread of fancied distress. Hope is itself one of the richest of man's actual possessions. It partakes largely of enjoyment. Life is rarely to be found without it. Disappointments must have come in close and frequent succession before we learn that the absence of it leaves the world without, perhaps, its dearest charm, and refuse—even hesitate—to listen to its flattering tale.

A large supply of hope for the future fortunes of the country consists in the fact, and the consciousness, that our cause is just. This is entitled to a front position in the list of motives for reliance on success. Without a good cause, skill in conduct is a dependence neither worthy of confidence nor entitled to respect. With it we are thrice armed. Never was a forbearing, forgiving and generous people so wickedly assailed. Never was civil war so wantonly or cruelly provoked. After submitting patiently to insult and outrage, until submissive patience ceased to be a virtue, the North was compelled to resort to defence; which was not slow to assume the shape of active resistance. That result was embraced with an earnestness unexpected to rebellion, and it soon reached an energy to restrain violence and repel wrong. In all this, it has only exhibited a necessity incident to the condition in which it was placed: a necessity involving, as the other branch of the alternative, loss of character, and an immense amount of

public property, without the chance of redemption, or the consolation of sympathy. It was to be expected that a contest thus begun should resemble other civil wars, which are generally bitter, bloody and relentless. The *fratrum ira*, when aroused, is actively vindictive; and it has now been eminently so on one side, and uncompromisingly severe on the other. It is not needful to bring into view the different civil wars that have crimsoned the pages of history. They have existed often, and almost everywhere; and fearful as the calamity of war abroad and with foreign nations is described to be, it is far less so than when it rages at home, and especially between parties belonging in ordinary allegiance to the same government. Lord Wellington, after the fall of Badajoz, writes to Lord Liverpool of the possibility of the French making an attempt on England herself, instead of Spain. "Then, indeed, would his Majesty's subjects discover what are the miseries of war, of which, by the blessing of God, they have hitherto had no knowledge; and the cultivation, the beauty and the prosperity of the country, and the virtue and happiness of its inhabitants, would be destroyed, whatever might be the result of the military operations. God forbid, that I should be a witness, much less an actor in the scene!" Voltaire writes, "War at its termination makes the conqueror as poor as the conquered. It is a gulf in which all the canals of abundance are lost." Such are its ordinary consequences according to a great soldier, and in the

judgment of a French philosopher, whose country is the most belligerent of modern nations. A leading literary journal of to-day thus describes some of the features of the War of the Roses, among our ancestors: "The wholesale beheading, hanging, and quartering, that took place after each alternation of fortune during the Yorkist and Lancastrian battles, were only exceeded in atrocity by the vindictive and insulting butcheries of prisoners perpetrated on the field. It has been computed that not fewer than eighty princes of the blood died deaths of violence during these wars; and the ancient nobility would have been well nigh extinguished altogether, had the struggle been prolonged. Edward the Fourth's first Parliament included in one act of attainder, Henry VI., Queen Margaret, their son Edward, the Dukes of Somerset and Exeter, the Earls of Northumberland and Devon, Wiltshire and Pembroke, Viscount Beaumont, Lords Ross, Neville, Rougemont, Dacre and Hungerfield, with one hundred and thirty-eight knights, priests and esquires, who were one and all adjudged to suffer all the penalties of treason." *Edinburg Review, April, 1862.*

There can be little doubt that the picture above exhibited applies essentially to the course of the Southern rebellionists of 1861-2, and to their side alone. No atrocity, in act or deed, has been justly imputed to the Union leaders. Sometimes a public order or proclamation has been wilfully misconstrued or falsified, but a perpetration of cruelty has not been



found, or even a threat of it. A prominent rebel commander affected to impute to an Union officer the inscription of "beauty and booty" on his colors, but he was soon shamed into the disavowal of the slander, by claiming to have made the charge metaphorically, and not in literal assertion of the fact. More recently, when some of the women of New Orleans were deservedly threatened with imprisonment, the country resounded with the assertion that they were to be given over to personal violence. These have been subtle perversions of the truth, containing the essence of a lie, which consists in the intention to deceive. Daily publications are made, either simply false for the occasion, out of nothing, or in direct and positive denial of what is known to be true.

The Ghost of the last mentioned, proclamation has recently (16th June) made its appearance in the great sanhedrim of our parent Country. This tribunal in addition to the powers of the ancient supreme court of that name which adjudged all civil and religious affairs of the Jews, even to the regulation of the calendar, assumes to clothe itself with fancied authority over alien christian people at a distance. Like other apparitions of the departed, it seems to have frightened the peers quite from their propriety. Their invocation is a hideous caricature. Not a word is found even in their version of the original, of violence, perpetrated or threatened: nor are the parties of whom it complains "ladies" in any proper sense. The mischievous women,

whose gross misconduct is ignorantly forgotten or intrusively forgiven, by the aristocratic branch of an unfriendly government, are not alluded to as being among the refined part of the sex, but only as calling themselves so. The worst penalty threatened, if any, is imprisonment, which surely they richly merit. If the discipline of the New Orleans jail resembles that of other places of confinement, separation of the sexes is as perfect as if they were in a convent, and violent treatment is impossible. The deference and respect for women which travellers impute with something like reproach to our people, are strangely contrasted with the opposite conduct in England. Without any desire to retaliate accusation, however appropriate, we would refer the "Lords temporal" to a publication made a day or two ago in a New York paper, exhibiting a long catalogue of acts of British cruelty and violence.

Notices of a like kind were taken in the House of Commons, with those above referred to in the House of Lords. In any view of these affairs it must be obvious that haste and bad temper have marked the proceedings of the two houses of Parliament. Their course was not prompted by any suggestion of Lord Lyons, who does not appear to have shown official offence in his intercourse with the government of the United States or his own. The worst way to obtain correction (if needful) of what was thought wrong, was to treat it as they have. As the thing now stands, we have the reason to complain.

A second argument in favor of Union success is found in the cruelty constantly indulged by the rebel armies and individuals; and a third in those habitual falsehoods of their speech, pen, and press. Each was distinctly foretold by the pledges of early secessionists, and each has been confirmed in history. The one was preached by an Ex-Governor of Virginia, in his avowal of blood-thirstiness and recommendation of wading through rivers of blood. The other was indicated in the conspiracy of fourteen Members of Congress to tear in pieces the Constitution, when their lips were still moist with the oath they had recently taken, by which, according to law, divine and human, they were "bound" to support it. (Art. VI.)

It seems to be believed that women are among the most frantic of secessionists. It is not easy to account for this infatuation, unless upon the rule which Homer puts into the lips of his leading hero, that

— "When to ill her mind  
Is turned, all hell contains no fouler fiend."

A lightness of spirits often exposes a woman to be carried away by the first breath of commotion. Mature reflection is not a common property of the sex; and excitement is apt to be greater in the cause of novelty, than in support of an established and regular order of things. Patient husbands have, in many instances, been sadly influenced by importunate wives, to the regret of their friends and their own repentance.

An opposite tendency is found in that estimable class

of men, the clergy. At the North, the best proofs of loyalty have come from them, and their prayers are offered to Heaven that they who war against the constituted authorities of the land, may be shown the error of their way. Even at the South, although one Bishop has buckled on his armor, yet his course is not approved. Another Bishop, recently deceased, is understood to have declared himself at first favorable to the Union. Evil example and contact may have disposed him to utter subsequently, other sentiments, which are reported at the close of life.

An unrighteous cause, wickedly carried on, can scarcely prosper; while arms manfully taken up in support of justice and defence of right, must not fail. These two positions, each suited to sustain the other, may be received as a fourth inducement for hope of final success. The foreign world does not yet perceive the real merits of the controversy or the questions seriously at issue. It clings to the idea, that a mere difference as to the rights of voluntary and peaceful separation, divides the parties. Even under this voluntary delusion, it has, at length, opened its eyes to the state of the war and the chances of success. A British Journal published in New York, having at first sternly inclined against the North, recently expresses itself in a different tone. Among several strong expressions, it says: "There must be something wonderfully cohesive in the Southern cause, if it can stand such repeated reverses as it has sustained of late, and await unflinch-

ingly the new levies that spring up to supply vacancies." (Albion, June 7.) The London Star, too, (May 29th,) says, "If Sir Lawrence Palk would point out to his friends and the public generally, how utterly undeserving of sympathy are those who have made wanton and spiteful destruction of property a part of their system of warfare, he might help to banish some of the irrational and discreditable feeling which has converted a certain class of Englishmen into partizans of the South."

"The Illustrated London News," of May 31st, 1862, has an editorial beginning thus: "Victories, such as they are, but at all events successive occupations of positions lately held by the Confederates, are reported by every American mail, and there seems little ground to doubt that the cause of the South is, in a military point of view, hopeless. The Confederates are pressed at all points by the enormous forces opposed to them, and whether they gain a battle here, or repulse an attack there, such items will go for nothing in the general account."

The allusion made in the last quotation, to the rebels gaining a battle here or repulsing an attack there, is not insignificant, and should receive serious notice. They are constantly on the watch for small affairs, which appear to be their special vocation. Teamsters are assailed; workmen butchered; bridges burned; passenger trains fired into. Advantages, seemingly small in each instance, are thus gained, which are more

or less destructive. This ought not to be. It argues supineness in an army which succeeds on larger occasions. Surely, protection is a duty and not a difficulty. "Attention" is the first word of military command. The enemy is furnished too often by the want of it, not only with an opportunity of boasting, in which he excels, but of an aggregate of small successes, which can be, and ought to be prevented.

These remarks of an intelligent foreign press, will serve to furnish the fifth of our reasons for hope, and that not the smallest in value. If the developments of the rebellion in its progress prove nothing else, they will, at least, have shown the high comparative merits of the non-cotton growing States. Intellectual cultivation and care, have always been more successful among them. By their fruits you may know them. Greater capacity for war, and mental and bodily faculties to exercise it, have been always the boast of the South, and as in many other particulars they have been left to enjoy the fancied consequence. The pride of Southern chivalry has been heretofore inflamed into extravagant self-esteem. This was almost contagious in its influence, although somewhat remote in its display. Even here, practical conviction has only of late been so often brought home as to dispel doubt. If once matter of too easy favorable opinion, the truth is now made clear by facts. Many instances have occurred in which cold steel or other not less sharp and stubborn testimony, has been brought to bear with conclusive clearness and

almost daily avowal. It may now fairly challenge disproof for the bayonet and the pen.

After all that has happened, credit cannot be withheld from the relations of a New York traveler in the Slave States. These were published by him in the year 1856, in a volume of more than seven hundred pages, entitled "A Journey in the Seaboard Slave States, with Remarks on their Economy. By Frederick Law Olmsted." They were set down by many as the effect in a great degree of prejudice; and they were regarded as either positively erroneous, or at least as colouring much too highly, faults which the present rebellion has shown to be faithfully described. In the preface, prepared of course after the book was completed, he speaks of having found frequent occasion for "growling" among "the notoriously careless, make-shift, imper-sistent people of the South."

He speaks of the "gasconading mountebank who was elected Governor" of Virginia. A desire to separate from the Union had long been felt. "Circulars are sent to the other slave States, to coax or shame them into joining South Carolina in seceding from the hateful connection with States, which, purely because they are disposed to be consistently democratic, are hated and despised by her rulers." p. 500. "The absurd State and sectional pride of the South Carolinians; their simple and profound contempt for everything foreign, except despotism; their scornful hatred especially, of all honestly democratic States, and of everything that

proceeds from them; the ridiculous cockerel-like manner in which they swell, strut, bluster and bully in their Confederate relations, is so trite a subject of amusement at the North that I can only allude to it as affording another evidence of a decayed and stultified people. In this particular, they are hardly surpassed by the most bigoted old Turks, or the most interior mandarins of the Yellow Dragon." p. 520. "There is one great evil hanging over the Southern Slave States, destroying domestic happiness and the peace of thousands. It is summed up in the single word—*amalgamation*." p. 601. Quoting Mrs. Douglas, a Virginia woman, who was tried convicted and punished for teaching a number of slaves to read; and she writes from jail.

Too much space is given to this author. One more quotation is necessary, on the subject of education. "How general is that intelligence which has made Georgia 'the Banner State of the South?' Of the *free native* population of Georgia, according to the census returns, one in nine and a-half, on an average, are without the smallest rudiments of school education (cannot read or write). In Maine, which among the old free States compares most closely with Georgia, in density of population, (that of one being sixteen, the other fifteen to square' mile,) the proportion is one in two hundred and forty-one. With other free States, a comparison would be still more unfavorable to the Georgia experiment."



It is an agreeable circumstance that the author who has thus described men and things as they have always existed, although not generally understood, is now performing patriotic duty at the "White House," as it is called. He has an efficient and prominent position in the Sanitary Commission and renders constant service on land and on water.

It might well be supposed that nothing was wanted to convince the most extreme of secessionists of the deep downfall of their cause, beyond the actual comparison of the positions into which the two different parts of the country are found after not much more than a twelve months struggle. These in their essential features have been brought about mainly by secession. The one, is desolate and impoverished, without money or commerce or even productive agriculture, and even its peculiar property is held by a precarious and uncertain tenure. Every public demonstration of prosperity is found in the other. Funds which are regarded as the barometer of national prosperity are elevated, and daily looking higher. Disappointment soon followed the outbreak of an organized attempt at revolution. Every thing was expected to succeed almost perhaps without an effort. The first movements were scarcely matter of surprise, and they certainly did not appear to fail. This was not strange on either side. One was prepared, the other was taken unprovided. Encouragement and excitement from seeming success, had no corresponding influence

of despondency among the well disposed. They felt only, that no reliance could be placed on the justice or virtue of their foes, and that self-dependence must be accompanied by manly and universal exertion. The thought was father to the deed. The spirit and the flesh came together to the conflict. A people that achieved their independence with a handful of armed men, and carried on a subsequent war with the same powerful country, not much more numerous organized, exhibits an army not often surpassed in numbers since the days of Xerxes. The London Times, calls the war, the greatest of our age. The day of sudden outbreak soon passed, and a patriot people, feeling their power and knowing their duty, rallied to the rescue. An enemy defeated almost daily, and driven to the borders of despair, still professes to cling to a hope that comes to all, while it can scarcely be blind to a lower depth in the lowest deep which they have been forced to fathom. As far as can be judged from rancorous expressions and bloody threats, mingled with the occasional echoes of former boastings, the abatement in the commanders of thinned ranks of reluctant recruits, is in power and not in will.

If our hopes of success are well sustained by the suggestions which have been submitted, and the glorious cause of the Union shall be triumphant, there is still in the distant prospect something beyond, which must not be overlooked. Since the attack upon Fort Sumter, and the unwept departure of the admin-

istration that refused to give it succor, all has been agitation. To this there must be an end. In the season that shall ensue, events now present, and those that are past may become a tale that is told. What are then to be the several conditions of a great country heretofore united? The happiest result would be if it were possible, that the former state of things should be restored in harmony not dissembled and actual peace. This would require an effort of returning reason like the cure of insanity, on the part of the rebellionists. It would be very like submission, but there is no midway. The word has nothing disreputable when the thing exists. If it could be so considered, there are precedents enough to take away particular reproach. In the course of the conflict there have been not a few unconditional surrenders, one of them of great magnitude including some fifteen thousand men under arms. When an antagonist proves to be so greatly the stronger and the better, mere surrender becomes an act of necessity and not of choice, and necessity knows no law even of shame. Such must probably be the end which crowns the work. The Northern people have proved their vitality in every particular, and have made every sort of demonstration of it in action and effect. Arms are triumphant and men and money are abundant. State funds and incorporated bodies, and the Federal government—manifest in their various stocks, which are always a mark of credit or the reverse—a condition

surpassing what has been known at least since the troubles began. A like criterion would prove a melancholy test elsewhere. Still victors and vanquished may perhaps melt into one common mass of prosperous elements rendered dearly welcome by reflections on the past, contentment with the present and anticipations of the future. One portion would continue to cultivate its commerce and manufactures for the common benefit, and the other would resume its partially abandoned successful growth of cotton for the comfortable clothing of all. Each would be benefitted by the prosperity of the other, and a long course of united happiness might be looked for, by a nation once again the envy of the world. Such a consummation must be regarded as almost impracticable in the nature of things, and is not to be seriously contemplated among the pleasing visions of reasonable hope. It would require a miracle. There is generosity to forgive a subdued enemy on the one side; but there is at present neither conscience to repent, nor justice and means on the other to restore what is wrongfully withheld, and to indemnify for what is lost.

There is an aspect which is rendered not altogether improbable by the overweening attention that slavery receives. This, the President in his interview with a committee of "Progressive Friends" declared to be, next to office-seeking, the most troublesome subject." If all of the States where slavery exists are to form a separate community, or each to be excluded from the

proper government of the nation, without any exception, it would be a grievous calamity. In the heart of several of them there is undiminished loyalty. Citizens of the United States residing in different border States are true to the Union. The bond of fellowship binding them to the North could not be broken without mutual regret and serious misfortune. If left to exercise their proper reflection, they will judge rightly, for their friends and neighbors. Measures should not be adopted under the influence of mistaken zeal, or duties urged foreign to the actual question, which might weaken their attachment, or possibly alienate them from us. A common happiness is in reserve for both together. At this moment some of the best men actively engaged in the cause of patriotism are of those border States. Their value is inestimable. To forfeit their attachment or co-operation in the great effort to put down rebellion, would be unwise and unjust. Slavery in almost all its aspects might be permitted to abide its time and give way to pressing claims which admit no difference of opinion or action. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.

Or must the fatal end of mistaken secession be at last mere inglorious defeat? It cannot be consoled by the sense of lands wasted, and cities burned by their once proud proprietors—slaves running away in countless numbers, and leaving no substantial equivalent—men destroyed, or, what is scarcely better destroying

their fellow men in daily conflict—persistence in an unequal contest, into the fierce and bloody extremity of which they are too often driven by compulsion and imprisonment—with nothing to gain from reluctant slaughter. If something like peace sooner or later should be attained, it may be that peace so called, when solitude is the price. They who shall have been chiefly instrumental in the fearful strife will carry to their graves an unfruitful remorse, leaving to whatever posterity may survive, a pervading curse. Evils so great will be aggravated by the consciousness that they are—self-invited—self-inflicted—self-punished—and being suicidal, not self-atoned.

Can we look in any event for a reformed and tranquil people? The Southern governments, whether united or distinct—and whether popular as would be most natural—or monarchical according to what has been charged, and perhaps admitted in one instance at least—whether independent or territorial—will soon or late discover that the power ruling and the people ruled, must have this chief end in view—the public welfare, foreshadowed by the public will. The ways of Providence are inscrutable: but it has seldom doomed to utter destruction even the least deserving. Sodom and Gomorrah are exceptions in the history of mankind.

1862, *June 30th.*









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